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Perspectives

PFC may be great equalizer



Laura Lucas

Government usually isn't something people praise, and there's usually a pretty sound reason for that. Pork here, corruption there equals displeasure with the systems that allocate our tax money. While the nation (or at least the less than 50 percent of it that votes) turns its eyes toward a presidential race in which tax responsibility is an important part, the University is also discussing budgets and student fees (our taxes).

Now, it's been in the paper for the past couple weeks, so I expect that you know that the ASUO Programs Finance Committee is right now approving budgets for student groups for

next fiscal year. Everyone from the Survival Center to the student unions to the Emerald has to prove their budget worthiness.

For those of you who have never been to a PFC meeting, this is how it goes: the group whose budget is up for approval makes a brief statement about their service to the University community. PFC members then get to ask questions and people at the hearing are able to respond or offer more information. The meeting is run nicely by PFC chairwoman Shantell Rice. She keeps all talk "germane" to the subject at hand.

The thing that struck me as I sat in on the Emerald's PFC

hearing Tuesday night was that the committee is the great equalizer. Not that all student groups get equal money or should, but rather that every group has to justify its funds, organize its budget and be accountable to the student body via PFC members.

The Emerald asked for a budget to help finance printing costs (we do this every year and didn't request an increase). To make sure that we are fiscally responsible, we have to submit canceled checks used to pay the printer. Makes sense.

The point is that no matter how important you or anyone else thinks your group is, you have to justify the funds. (Somebody ought to tell that to

our national government.)

I know some people out there are want to point out that PFC can make mistakes, but the truth is that PFC does a pretty important job, and they do it pretty well. Even though a few members seem have their own personal concerns (and why not?), they certainly are representatives for students' voices.

Be glad that someone out there is watching out for your money. And be glad that the bright lights of interrogation shine on all, even us at the Emerald.

Laura Lucas is an editorial editor for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper. She can be reached via e-mail at llucas@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

THE WEEK IN THUMBS



To another progressive Oregon move

Gov. John Kitzhaber was the first governor in the nation to endorse former Sen. Bill Bradley as the Democratic presidential nominee. The governor's main reason is Bradley's plan to help millions of Americans with much-needed health care.

To remember what really counts

The Complete Count Committee, a group attempting to make sure local populations such as the poor, youth and minority groups are counted fully in the census, launched public meetings Tuesday night. By counting under-represented groups as accurately as possible there will be increased federal funding throughout the area.



To losing an advocate

Former ASUO President and Duck supporter Bobby Lee, who joined the City Council three years ago, has said he will not run again for that position. The University will lose a valuable voice in local politics.

To a Fox leaving the hen house

Michael J. Fox, known to the masses for his comically conservative Alex P. Keaton in television's "Family Ties," is leaving his current show "Spin City" because the stress is too great while he is dealing with Parkinson's Disease.

Stop the killing: Abortion denies right of life

America has come a long way in terms of equal and civil rights, but we are not going to get any further if we don't start respecting life. Our society is so death-oriented, we believe death or killing is and end to our problems and a way out of our suffering. The death penalty, euthanasia and abortion are all examples of our society's disrespecting life and moving farther and farther away from peace.

Saturday, Jan. 22, is the 27th anniversary of denied life to the unborn. Twenty-seven years ago, Roe vs. Wade ruled that unborn babies were no longer people,

but a choice. Since that day, more than 36 million babies have been killed in America alone. In a place that promises unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, the most basic right of life is being denied. America the beautiful doesn't seem so beautiful now.

My fellow students, if we want to live in a peaceful world, if we want to promote love, if we want to stop the hate and violence, we must stop the killing of our unborn children. How are we to flourish as a society if we kill our most helpless and innocent members every day? In the words of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, "The unborn child is a human being, capa-

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ble of love and being loved — created and loved by God. ... Every abortion kills two: the child and the conscience of the mother. ... My Brothers and Sisters, I beg you in the name of God, do not kill the unborn child."

Most people would say that abortion should be the choice of the woman because it is her body and she needs to empower herself.

"When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading to women

that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we see fit." Elizabeth C. Stanton, the organizer of the first women's rights convention in the U.S., and a leader in the women's suffrage movements, spoke these words.

Also, "There is so much talk these days about empowering women. What greater power can we give them than the tools to survive a crisis?" Mary C. Agee, the founder of The Nurturing Network, said this.

To the students, faculty and staff, I present to you a challenge. A challenge to look into how much you respect life. How much does our society respect life? What

kind of message are we sending to the youth of today when we are not willing to protect life?

If we all really want peace, we all need to work for justice, and the killing of unborn babies is the most unjust occurrence in the world today.

Abortion is wrong, and I bet my life on that, and I bet my soul on that.

"It seems to be as clear as daylight that abortion would be a crime." — Mahatma Gandhi

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CORRECTION

The story "PFC not slowed by grievances" (ODE, Jan. 19), should have read, ASUO President Wylie Chen said he did not know if Saferide complied with federal law, but it has been withheld through ASUO and Oregon University System rules. It also should have read that Chen said he planned to introduce an alternative to Saferide that would shuttle both men and women.